

CONSTRAINTS PERCEIVED BY TRIBAL AND NON-TRIBAL DAIRY FARMER RELATING TO DAIRY COMMUNICATION IN CACHAR DISTRICT OF ASSAM

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ABSTRACT

An investigation among the non-tribal and tribal dairy farmers in four development blocks of Cachar district of Assam revealed that, among non-tribal farmers, nine variables viz., age, farm size, average milk production, average milk disposal, average milk consumption, annual family income, annual family income from dairying, social participation and extension contact, while in case of the tribal farmers, 11 independent variables i.e., in addition to the above mentioned nine variables, herd size and farm size were found to have positive and significant correlation with communication behavior. Regression analysis revealed extension contact crucially influenced communication behavior of farmers.

KEYWORDS: *Communication behavior, Dairy farmers, Tribal & Non-tribal*

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INTRODUCTION

In the transfer of technology, communication plays a vital role by influencing the farmers. Better communication skill would lead to enhanced understanding and would gradually lead to an improved farming scenario including dairying. Moreover, communication is the result of various social actions, interactions, and superstitions prevailing in the society. Therefore the study was taken up to identify those characteristics which effected communication behavior of the farmers for strategizing a better plan for dairy development.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was undertaken to particularly know the effect of socioeconomic attributes on communication behavior among 50 tribal and 50 non-tribal dairy farmers in four selected development blocks of geographically significant and politically prioritized Cachar District of Assam, namely Silchar, Salchapra, Borkhola, and Sonai signified by relatively more numbers of tribal and non-tribal dairy farmers residing in the same area. Three villages, each having evenly dominated by tribal and non-tribal dairy farmers were purposively selected from each of the four blocks. A list of all the tribal and non-tribal dairy farmers having at least one milch cow/buffalo was prepared separately in consultation with the A. H. & Vety. and Dairy Development Officials of the district. A total of twenty five dairy farmers comprising of both tribal and non-tribal were selected randomly from each of the blocks so as to make 50 tribal and 50 non-tribal respondents and the sample size of 100. Data were collected by personally interviewing the selected respondents with the reliable and valid interview schedule. Reliability of the interview

schedule was worked out by a test-retest method in the nearby Karimganj district and was formed to be $r = 0.93$. Further content validity was seen while preparing the final schedule. Data were collected, analyzed and inferences were drawn as under.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table I revealed that in the case of non-tribal dairy farmers, farm size and annual family income were positively and significantly ($P < 0.05$) correlated with communication behavior. Age, average milk production, average milk disposal, average milk consumption, annual family income from dairying, social participation and extension contact were positively and highly significantly correlated ($P < 0.01$) to communication behavior. While in case of tribal farmers, family size and annual family income were positively and significantly correlated ($P < 0.05$) with communication behavior which might be due to bigger family members to become more profit-oriented for supporting their family and thus were compelled to improve their communication skills and gather information for success in their venture, while increased annual income resulted in better living standards & knowledge and thus motivated the farmers to become more successful in turn leading to increasing communication skills. Age, herd size, farm size, average milk production, average milk disposal, average milk consumption, annual family income from dairying, social participation and extension contact were positively and highly significantly ($P < 0.01$) related to communication behavior. Actually, with increased age comes more experience and hence more communication skills. Again, farmers with more animals were more profit oriented, which led them to search for more information sources and hence increased communication, farmers with greater landholding were more prosperous and economically viable and were more in contact with the information sources. A farmer having more milk production; milk disposal; milk consumption and more income from dairying were greatly motivated for more success which leads to more communication with the information sources. Farmers having more social participation & extension contact obviously had more intense communication behavior due to their extrovert nature. Similar findings were seen by Islam *et al* (2006) who found that milk production of the dairy farmer was influenced by the socio-economic and communication variables, Mayande and Taley (2009) revealed that education, social participation, annual income, land holding had highly positive and significant relationship with overall communication behaviour, while Nagaraj and Krishnamurthy (2009) in their study found out that farm size, annual income, annual family income from dairying and extension contact were significantly related to the communication behavior while Jahagirdar and Balasubramanya (2010) and Phukan *et. al.* (2013) found that annual income had a positive significant relationship.

As indicated in Table II, out of 12 independent variables, extension contact was found to contribute positively and significantly ($P < 0.05$) in case of non-tribal dairy farmers, while it had positive and highly significant ($P < 0.01$) effect in the case of tribal dairy farmers to communication behavior. Extension contact having a significant effect on communication might have been due to the general alertness of the farmers in the area of investigation. The co-efficient of multiple determination (R^2) with 12 independent variables could explain 82.90 per cent (in non-tribal farmers) and 89.1 per cent (in tribal farmers) variation in the communication behavior. The 'F' value for R (16.862, $P < 0.01$) in case of non-tribal dairy farmers and (29.715, $P < 0.01$) in the case of tribal dairy farmers were found to be highly significant. The farmers with better extension contact probably had information sources in dairy farming and therefore, obviously excelled in communication behavior. Similar results were also revealed by Zadeng (2012) when she conducted studies on the above poverty line farmers in Mizoram while Singh *et. al.* (2013) found that the communication behavior of the farmers was positively and significantly associated with level of education, size of land holding, socio

economic status and social participation of the farmers.

CONCLUSIONS

From the above study, it could be concluded that age, farm size, average milk production, average milk disposal, average milk consumption, annual family income, annual family income from dairying, social participation, extension contact, herd size and farm size were having a close association with the communication behavior of the farmers. But as far as the effects were concerned, extension contact played an important role in communication behavior of the tribal and non-tribal dairy farmers. An appropriate extension strategy, therefore, might work with the farmers for the development of the dairy sector in the area.

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Table 1: Correlation Analysis between Socio Personal and Communication Behavior

Sl. No.	Independent Variables	Non-Tribal ('r' Value)	Tribal ('r' Value)
1.	Age (X ₁)	0.421 ^{**}	0.434 ^{**}
2.	Family size (X ₂)	0.149 ^{NS}	0.310 [*]
3.	Educational status (X ₃)	0.095 ^{NS}	-0.17 ^{NS}
4.	Herd size (X ₄)	0.081 ^{NS}	0.387 ^{**}
5.	Farm size (X ₅)	0.337 [*]	0.706 ^{**}
6.	Avg. milk production (X ₆)	0.677 ^{**}	0.687 ^{**}
7.	Avg. milk disposal (X ₇)	0.703 ^{**}	0.685 ^{**}
8.	Avg. milk consumption (X ₈)	0.429 ^{**}	0.401 ^{**}
9.	Annual family income (X ₉)	0.356 [*]	0.302 [*]
10.	Annual family income from dairying (X ₁₀)	0.670 ^{**}	0.685 ^{**}
11.	Social participation (X ₁₁)	0.741 ^{**}	0.839 ^{**}
12.	Extension contact (X ₁₂)	0.646 ^{**}	0.789 ^{**}
Non-significant. *, Significant at 5% level. **, Significant at 1% level.			

**Table 2: Regression Analysis Communication Behaviour on Socio-Personal
Attributes of Tribal and Non-Tribal Dairy Farmers**

Sl. No.	Independent Variable	Variable No.	Non-Tribal		Tribal	
			Regression Coefficient b Value	't' Value for b	Regression Coefficient b Value	't' Value for b
1.	Age	X ₁	0.013	0.18	0.099	1.249
2.	Family size	X ₂	-0.076	-0.258	-0.194	-0.771
3.	Educational status	X ₃	-0.534	-0.718	0.403	0.67
4.	Herd size	X ₄	-0.387	-0.693	-0.01	-0.013
5.	Farm size	X ₅	0.111	0.43	-0.046	-0.152
6.	Avg. milk production	X ₆	3.585	1.032	-1.019	-0.336
7.	Avg. milk disposal	X ₇	2.252	0.364	1.856	0.482
8.	Avg. milk consumption	X ₈	-2.831	-0.837	1.078	0.518
9.	Annual family income	X ₉	0.00	0.747	0.00	-0.536
10.	Annual family income from dairying	X ₁₀	0	-1.215	0.00	0.00
11.	Social participation	X ₁₁	2.205	1.679	2.183	1.296
12.	Extension contact	X ₁₂	1.02*	2.293	1.27**	3.502
R ² =0.829, 'F' value for R=16.862** R ² =0.891, 'F' value for R=29.715**						